



For Immediate Release

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SENATOR BROWN SMALL BUSINESS FLOOR SPEECH AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

WASHINGTON, D.C. – This weekend, we celebrated Small Business Saturday, when Ohioans and people around the country show their support for local businesses in their community by shopping local for holiday gifts.

Small businesses and their workers drive our economy.

Small businesses create jobs and economic growth in our communities – in the heartland, in small towns and overlooked neighborhoods, places that often don't get a lot of outside investment.

The stakeholders in these businesses aren't nameless, faceless shareholders – they're our neighbors, family members, the people you see at school and at the grocery store and at church.

And they are vital to our economic recovery. It's why we passed the bipartisan Paycheck Protection Program last year – and it's why Democrats and President Biden expanded it in the American Rescue Plan.

Last week, I asked Ohioans on social media to tell us about their favorite local businesses to support this holiday shopping season, that go above and beyond in their communities.

The response was overwhelming – hundreds of stories, poured in from Ohioans, sharing their favorite local stores and cafes and restaurants and other businesses.

I want to share a few of them today:

- Beth talked about “Mootown Creamery in Berea” – she said they’re “so involved in the community, never say no when help is needed.”
- Robin gave a shout-out to “Snazzies in Oxford for local arts.”
- Sarah mentioned “Sunset Bistro in Bowling Green. They not only support their local community, they are devoted to honoring our veterans.”
- Heather wrote about “Let’s Eat Cake in Urbana.” She said, “Owner Tina is always doing something for the downtown business association and the greater community.”
- Donna said, “I can’t say enough about Scott, the owner of Salad KraZe – Scott goes above and beyond to make the City of Avon Lake a great place to live and raise our children.”

- Loria said, “Pouka Art & Photography in Grove City does amazing digital printings and photography. She restores old photographs into digital paintings.”
- Tia said, “Gemini Gems & Creations in Lancaster – Wonderful people who started selling out of their home and during town events, and now finally have their own shop.”
- Teresa mentioned “Chris Fultz’s sign company Fultz Signs and his pizza place, Bluelick General, in Lima.”
- Adam mentioned, “the Copper Penny Salon in Pettisville.”
- Vickie mentioned the “Charmed Farmhouse” in Wellington. She said “They take food drives and donate to those in town who directly help our community. They survived shutdown and thrive still.”

Think about that – they survived, and thrive.

This pandemic has hit our small businesses hard, and for so many of them, they are still paying their workers and serving their community because of PPP, and because of our work through the American Rescue Plan to get people vaccinated.

PPP helped Ohio businesses survive. Vaccines are bringing back customers, and allowing these small businesses to thrive again.

And the bipartisan infrastructure plan the president signed this month is going to mean investment in these businesses’ local communities.

People in Ohio and across the country remember how after the last economic crisis in 2008 and 2009, the biggest corporations recovered, while large swaths of the country were left behind.

Many of these same communities have watched for decades as factories closed, investment dried up, and storefronts were boarded over.

We are not making that mistake.

We are investing in rebuilding our roads and bridges and bus and rail systems, to revitalize so many downtowns, and connect more people with these businesses.

We know businesses can’t survive on their own – they need safe streets and sidewalks, they need other businesses around, they need bus stops nearby.

And they need customers with money in their pockets.

As part of the American Rescue Plan, we passed the largest tax cut for working families, ever – the Child Tax Credit.

That’s giving millions of Ohio families a tax cut every single month. And they’re not putting that money in a Swiss bank account – they’re spending it on groceries and school supplies and the occasional meal out at these local businesses.

We need to make sure those tax cuts continue, and we need to do all we can to ensure these local businesses can continue employing their workers and supporting their communities.

This holiday season, let's commit to shopping local, and in the Senate, let's commit to putting small businesses and workers at the center of our economy.

When we put communities, not corporations, at the center of everything we do, we'll get more businesses that actually value their workers, and measure success the same way families do – not in quarterly earnings reports.

We'll get more entrepreneurs building something for the long-term, something with roots.

The Ohioans who shared these stories know the vibrancy and the dynamism and the diversity of working-class towns and neighborhoods all over this country.

We need to get to work to invest in them, and ensure that those places, America's Main Streets – not Wall Street – are at the center of a better economy.

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